

# THE GREATEST YET.

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to our confidence—particularly and eloquently warned by Mr. Clay and Mr. Webster—that if ever the abolitionists got a hold upon the organized physical force of the country they would govern without law, save at the authority of the courts and throw down all the defences of civil liberty.

But if the south had not seceded, we might have made a successful defense of our constitution though the powers of the government were in the hands of its enemies. With the aid of the southern people, if they had been true to their duty, we would have organized an opposition formidable in its moral and political power that you would scarcely have dared to assault us. No wonder that we were "union men," for even the minor meant personal liberty, free thought, an independent press, habeas corpus, trial by jury, the impartial administration of justice—all these great legal institutions which our forefathers had shed so much of blood to establish up.

The south deserted us at the crisis of our fate, and left us in our weakness to the mercy of the most unprincipled tyrants that ever betrayed a pale race. This was not mere folly and madness; it was something much worse. We could not but feel that we were deeply wounded. There was no remedy for the dire calamities with which we were threatened except in bringing the seceded states back to their places in the Union. Our exertions of legal duty, our unceasing sense of injury and preparation for our best interests, all impelled us to join the new administration in the use of such force as might be found necessary to execute the laws in every part of the country.

## THE WAR OF THE PHARISES.

But the abolitionists wanted a war for the destruction of the moon, for the overthrow of the constitution, for the subversion of free government, and for the subjugation of the whole country to that "higher law" which imposes restraint upon the rapidity and maligny of the ruling power. As such a war the national conscience was opposed. The soul of every respectable officer in the army and navy revolted at it, and every virtuous man in private life felt it to be an inspeakable outrage. To those who doubted before, the disaster of Bull Run made it plain that the war could not be successfully carried on unless it was put upon principles consistent with the usages of chivalry and the safety of our own institutions. Therefore, it was that on the 2d of July, 1861, congress, with almost perfect unanimity, passed a resolution through both houses, declaring in the most explicit words that the war should be conducted to preserve the constitution, and not to revolutionize it. I give you here the words of the resolution itself from the Congressional Globe, p. 223:

Besides, That the present deplorable civil war has been forced upon the country by the discontents of the southern states, now in arms against the constitutional government, and in arms around the capital, that in this national emergency, congress, banding all their means of mere passion of resentment, will redouble only its duty to the whole country, that the war is not waged on their part in any spirit of oppression or for any purpose of conquest or subjugation or purposes of overthrowing or interfering with the rights or established institutions of these states, but to defend and maintain the supremacy of the constitution, and to preserve the union with all the dignity, equality and rights of the several states unimpaired; and that as soon as these objects are avowedly pursued, the war ought to cease."

Confiding in this asssurance, democrats from every northern state rushed to the front by the hundred thousand; the border states of the south gave in their formal adhesion to the government, and our great military leaders drew their swords with alacrity in support of the tree institutions to which they had shown their fidelity so often before.

With what base perfidy this solemn pledge was broken I need not tell you, for this speech shows that you know it well. You expressly declare that so far from sustaining the government you revolutionized it. Instead of a war for the union, you claim that it put the states out of the union, and you had a right to keep them out as long as you pleased or admit them to their places on any terms, however degrading, which you chose to dictate. Just as re-stated, the supremacy of the constitution over your party's rules held, and so far as I know from their public declarations still held, that the victory of the federal forces established the constitution not only in the south but in the north, and therefore they were not bound to observe its limitations, either in their legislative, judicial or executive measure. Instead of bringing back the states with their rights unimpaired, according to your promise, you crippled, enslaved, subjugated and dismembered them. Instead of using the war power for the just and lawful purposes to which you were pledged, you converted it into a black republican job to put the rights of all the people permanently under the feet of an unprincipled party.

I submit this part of the case to your consideration. I ask you to say whether you can find in the whole history of the human race another instance of similar perfidy on a scale so large. The loss of the Massachusetts authorities in selling the surrendered Fugitives into slavery after a solemn promise to the contrary was but the "sewer of an idea," on which you were in the fullness of its growth. Their act was in its nature and character nearly as bad as it could be; but only one score of helpless people suffered by it, the victims of your treachery are counted by millions.

## THE CORRUPTION OF THE PHARISES.

The offenses which you are now engaged in committing upon the public treasury are the natural sequence of your crimes against popular liberty. Universal experience proves that power usurps, will always be dishonestly used. Seeing that the abolitionists were led by men whom no oath could hold to the constitution, and whom no pledge could bind to an observance of its principles, we had no right to expect a decent regard for justice in their administration of the national finances. I do not mean that the masses of your party were, or are now, destitute of common integrity. But that was overruled by the political doctrines of their leaders. Having once set aside the established law of the land they had no standard by which they could measure the moral conduct of themselves or others, and they became incapable of seeing the difference between right and wrong in public affairs. The "higher law" threw the reins loose on the neck of all evil passions. It not only abrogated the constitution, but the declogue as well, and the eighth commandment was nullified with the rest.

You have consequently made ours the corrupt government on this side of Constantinople. Perhaps you will say this is a mere general assertion. But I am ready to maintain the truth of it against all appears. You may take the rottenest monarchy in Europe, go over its history for a hundred years, and procure the worst act you can find of fraud and swindling upon its people, and if I do not show something worse committed here under the auspices of the party now in power I will give up the case.

I am speaking of the government of the officials who rule us for their pleasure and plunder, not for their personal profit and it is no easier to quote Mr. Lincoln's speech before the senate on the trial of Belknap. Hisesy was on the virtuous intelligence of the people, and he argued from that the duty of their servants to behave with integrity. He certainly did not mean to whitewash the administration. If he had meant to do so he could not have succeeded, for there was not enough in his bucket to drown the twenty thousandth part of the job.

While you were hunting for certificates of character among the speeches of the impeachment managers, why did you overlook that of Mr. Hoar? He said in effect (for I cite him from memory) that the one production in which our country excelled all others in the world is the creation of its government. There was the testimony of a called witness belonging to your party, who knew whereof he affirmed and spoke directly to the point.

But it is useless to cite the evidence of individuals upon great public facts that are left and seen and known of all men. Nothing ever was more notorious than the general disregard of all sound principle by this administration. No people on earth are now suffering so much from extravagancy, taxation, and nowhere does so small a portion of the taxes go to legitimate public purposes, or so much to the rubes themselves and the rings they chose to favor. Industry is crushed as it never was before. Labor no longer works for itself; since all and more than all of its surplus profits are exacted and consumed by the hangers-on of the government. Now, although we call ourselves freemen or freedom, we are in all intent and purpose slaves, so long as you continue to make us labor over to you the earnings of our labor; for the essence of slavery consists in compelling one man, or class of men, to work for another without equivalent. We are determined to relieve ourselves from this iniquitous bondage, as far as we can legally and peaceably, and if you do not help us, you must at least cease to exact us by preventing to be an anti-slavery man upon principle.

A PHARISES BRAVADO.

You will tell me that the republican party will punish its own meekos.<sup>11</sup> The new paper report of your speech says that this was greeted with laughter from the republican side of the house. Certainly it sounds like the broadest of jokes. If you meant it in earnest, I pray to say what you found this claim of impartial justice upon. You will hardly prove it by showing that Bristol and Wilkins succeeded, with much tribulation, in convicting certain manufacturers of crooked whiskeys, and thereby got them selves turned out of office. It is vain to deny that there is, and has been, a general system of dishonesty pervading all ranks of the civil service, which, so far from being punished, is protected, encouraged and rewarded by the highest authorities. You have set your faces like a flint against all investigations tending to expose nakedness. Proof of that, if proof was wanted, would be found in your own denunciation of the present course for pushing its inquiries into those regions where venality and corruption might otherwise have dwelt in safety.

In all your southern measures you have shown a positive adherence of honest government. You forced into all places of power men whose characters were notoriously bad, and maintained them while they perpetrated the most shameless robberies. You resisted every effort of the oppressed people to throw them off, and when those efforts were successful in some of the states, you mourned the fall of the felon with sincere lamentation. Just look at the crew of godless wretches which, so far from being punished, is protected, encouraged and rewarded by the highest authorities. You have set your faces like a flint against all investigations tending to expose nakedness. Proof of that, if proof was wanted, would be found in your own denunciation of the present course for pushing its inquiries into those regions where venality and corruption might otherwise have dwelt in safety.

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